

Chats with

Professor Atkinson

on his

Special Treatment

For the Various Forms of
Lameness.

ATKINSON



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ON

PROFESSOR ATKINSON,

HAMILTON HOUSE,
12 PARK LANE, W.

WITH CHATS ON VARIOUS AILMENTS
AND FORMS OF TREATMENT.

London.

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PROFESSOR ATKINSON,
HAMILTON HOUSE, 12 PARK LANE, LONDON, W.



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PROFESSOR ATKINSON,

HAMILTON HOUSE, PARK LANE, W.

Reprinted from "St. Paul's," 1895."

Now and then a genius, which has been hitherto unsuspected or has lain *perdu*, suddenly springs up and causes much wonder and comment, evokes much criticism, favourable and unfavourable, but when thoroughly investigated by the unprejudiced, ends by being duly recognised.

More especially during the last year the work of this remarkable man, Professor John Atkinson, has come so much to the front that he may truly be said to have become a "man of note." Although he has for many years been intimately and practically known as the "Great Bone-setter" by all the principal athletes, jockeys, and sporting men, amateur and professional, throughout the kingdom, his recent successes in certain high quarters have justly brought him with a bound into name and fame.

Now there exists an erroneous impression in the minds of some of those who have not as yet seen and judged of Mr. Atkinson's work for themselves, that a bone-setter is a man who has never been inside a dissecting-room or lecture-room, and has never studied anatomy. Very different, however, is the reality in his case. He has been examined on, and has passed in, anatomy, physiology, and those branches of science which bear upon his immediate profession, under some of the most eminent specialists of the century, and his diplomas are framed and hung in his consulting room for the inspec-

tion of those who are interested. Now it will be necessary to go back briefly to the circumstances which led Mr. Atkinson to become a bone-setter.

"I think," he says, reflectively, "that my career in life may be said to have determined by an accidental circumstance which happened when I was seven years of age. My father owned large estates at Milnthorpe, Westmorland, and one of his gamekeepers had received severe injuries, including a dislocation of the shoulder, incurred in a tussle with poachers. Just at that time the elder Hutton, who had accumulated a considerable fortune in London, came down to visit the late Mr. Moore, the millionaire, who was one of his patients. He was promptly sent for to attend the man, and though I was forbidden to remain in the room during the operation, with childish curiosity, and in much trepidation, I contrived to peep in at the half-opened door, and to see all that was going on. I then and there resolved that I, too, would be a bone-setter."

Shortly after this youthful experience, a fracture of the elbow, whilst wrestling, caused him to apply to Hutton on his own account, on which occasion he declares that "he scarcely felt any pain, being so deeply absorbed in the operation," whilst Hutton, greatly interested in the plucky, intelligent boy, took considerable pains to explain to him the workings of the various bones, muscles, and sinews, and imparted much valuable information which speedily led to practical results.

It was during his schooldays at King's College that the knack of, or gift for, bone-setting, for it is as much a special gift as a genius for music, painting, or any other art, rapidly developed. He may there be considered to have made his first start, masters and boys alike applying to him to have their bones "put back," when they had been "put out," in their rougher athletic sports. Out of school hours the young student was wont to pore over all available books on the anatomy of the human and animal body, and, being passionately fond of animals, he decided to study this portion of creation first.

A ward in Chancery (for both parents had died early), and having means wherewith to order his own life and to carry out his own ideas, Mr. Atkinson studied and worked to such good purpose that he carried off, not only the Fellowship—the highest degree—but also the chief prizes for the best comparative anatomy and physiology of the year in a distinguished college. Paris was his next goal, but the pleasures and dissipations of the fascinating capital held no attractions for him. He had come for one object: to work and to study early and late at the best schools of learning, and nothing was allowed to interfere with this determination. It was there it gradually became manifest to him that it would be impossible for him to run conscientiously in the ordinary groove of “orthodoxy.” His peculiar gift becoming more apparent, he formed theories totally at variance with those observed in every-day practice, and he found himself compelled to strike out an original line for himself. The fact that these theories, brought into his “every-day practice,” have borne abundant and good results is now largely proved, as thousands of the maimed and halt can testify. Lately, many public acknowledgements in the papers of his success by well-known and distinguished patients have brought him still more prominently forward. “We hear a great deal of his successes” is the stock cry of a few cavillers who have never witnessed his work, “but we never hear of his failures.” This may be true quite in another sense. Mr. Atkinson’s time may, perhaps, chiefly be occupied in repairing the failures of others.

With his private consulting-rooms in Park Lane, where he sees his wealthier patients, we have nought to do at the present moment, though from personal knowledge we could quote extensively thereof. Suffice it to speak of his public rooms, just off Wilton Place, where he sees yearly thousands of poor patients gratis—and there is truly a motley crowd this day assembled—of, apparently, “incurables.” Those, however, who have made it a habit for a long time past to visit this extraordinary place regularly, and have closely watched what

the patients themselves call the "miraculous" cures effected, know otherwise. "Incurable," *in his own line*, be it understood, is a word that is scarcely to be found in Mr. Atkinson's vocabulary, nor is there anything at all "miraculous" in his method. To the impartial and intelligent observer, whether he be layman or in the medical profession, it is clearly manifest that the fundamental principles of Mr. Atkinson's system are based on the soundest practical common-sense, born of genius, cultivated by profound study, and brought to perfection in the exquisite manipulation of which he is past-master. "My work," he says, quietly, "is open to all the world, and I am always glad to place any knowledge or experience that I may have gained at the service of science in the interests of suffering humanity."

But to business. "First come, first served," is Mr. Atkinson's rule. Yonder is a new case, a young athlete who has suffered for a year from displacement of knee cartilage. He had been many months an in-patient, and afterwards an out-patient elsewhere, and tells you that "a pal," who was cured by the Professor, sent him. The leg is perfectly stiff, is beautifully bandaged and done up in what is known as "Scott's dressing." He has not been able to bend the knee for a year. In less than half-an-hour, the skilful practitioner has rendered it perfectly pliable, by seemingly a simple process. The youth is told to look in again twice, and, remarking quaintly as he lays down his stick, "I guess, Professor, I shan't want no more of that 'ere stick," leaves the room, quickly and happily relieved.

The next who is brought in, wailing pitifully, is a hapless infant of some three years, who has been in a foreign hospital for a few months, without being allowed to walk. Its tiny limb is neatly encased in splints. Taking the child into his arms, he soothes it tenderly, and as the poor babe looks up at the kind, benevolent face, it absolutely smiles, when presently he begins to manipulate it gently. In a few minutes he bids the little one "try her feet." At first a little tottery, then some more judicious handling, and gradually it limps alone.

“After a few more visits she will run about as well as ever,” remarks Mr. Atkinson to the mother, who volubly expresses her gratitude in French.

Multitudes of cases might be quoted, in fact, a big book might be made out of them, but want of space prevents more than a passing mention of a third patient, but it is a typical case. He is a powerfully-built, heavy-weight wrestler who has for a long time been incapacitated by an injury from following his profession. The arm hangs down painfully, is immovable, and presents an odd appearance at the shoulder. Mr. Atkinson at once pronounces it to be “a displacement of the head of the biceps, one of his favourite cases,” and begins to operate. In a short time the man is told to “hit out as hard as he can” at the operator, and obeys this somewhat startling and somewhat unconventional order with hearty goodwill.

Other cases follow for a while; then, the room being temporarily cleared, Mr. Atkinson settles himself down into a huge armchair for an hour’s rest. He looks pale and wearied after his exertions, but declares that tea and a chat will soon revive him.

Of good birth and connections, and singularly free himself from all prejudices against those who differ from him, Mr. Atkinson rapidly gains a strong personal regard and esteem from all the many sides of society with which he is brought in contact. His very quiet unassuming manner inspires people with confidence, while his great heart is open to all suffering humanity. He is well known to be a true, staunch friend, and is never heard to say a hard or bitter word, even of those who, knowing nothing of his system, condemn it.

“Live and let live,” he says, “and let us each do the most we can. Life is short enough.”

Here and there a distinguished surgeon will visit him and interest himself in the work. Nay, some very great men, with large-hearted tolerance and true generosity of mind, have taken “cases” to Mr. Atkinson, scrupling not to express their admiration of his method.

Now, at the risk of being dubbed an “ignorant senti-

mentalist"—"faddist" is, perhaps, a later term—it must be admitted that it is an immense relief, to hear that Mr. Atkinson is a strong anti-vivisectionist. "Vivisection!"—he gives almost a disgusted shudder at the word. The question indeed was somewhat superfluous. "I love animals," he says, reproachfully, "and to see them in any sort of pain gives me the keenest suffering."

But the hour for rest is over, and you judge by the increase of sound in the ante-room that Mr. Atkinson has other claims on his time. There are half-a-dozen new patients waiting without, some encumbered with splints, some on crutches. (You shrewdly suspect that they will soon make a bonfire of the appliances.) The wonders that you have been privileged to witness justify the belief that these sufferers, too, will presently make their exit in far happier bodily circumstances, under the healing influence of the great bone-setter's manipulation.

CHATS WITH PROFESSOR ATKINSON: VARIOUS AILMENTS UNDER HIS TREATMENT.

At an afternoon party lately, I met a lady who described to me a wonderful cure made upon her by Professor Atkinson, the well-known Bone-setter. She had suffered acutely for a lengthened period from rheumatic neuritis, and for a year had been unable to put her feet to the ground and was carried from room to room in a basket chair. The severity of the pain had caused almost total loss of sleep, extreme attenuation, contraction of muscles and a rigidity of the ankles and bones of both feet. After long persuasion, she was induced to send for Professor Atkinson though, as she confessed, without any hope of recovery. It was all done by manipulation she told me. She had no medicines, and with enthusiasm she declared that after the first week of daily treatment she found it quite interesting to watch

the gradual improvement as, day by day, the joints became more and more supple, the flesh losing its previous anæmic appearance and resuming its natural normal healthy colour, while she could walk each day, "a little and yet a little further," ascend and descend "a few more stairs," until finally she recovered perfect health and was enabled once more to take her place in the world. Deeply interested in her story, and armed with an introduction, I presented myself one afternoon at Professor Atkinson's private residence and requested the favour of an interview, which was courteously accorded. "Ask me any questions you like, he said," "and I will answer them to the best of my ability." "Then, as you are so good, Professor, I began, "Will you explain to me the fundamental theory of your system?"

"With pleasure. It is very simple. It is to assist nature in restoring the natural action of joints and limbs which are supposed to be incurable. My predecessors, the Messrs. Hutton, were world-renowned bone-setters."

"But you do not work, apparently, in accordance with the ordinary method of the day?"

"No, in just the reverse manner; therefore, the most difficult case to the medical profession is often the most simple to me."

"Dare I ask then if you have many opponents in the medical profession?"

"I have many and among the most eminent surgeons of the age, yet I should hardly call them 'opponents,' as nearly all my cases come to me pronounced 'incurable' under other treatment, but several doctors who have taken the trouble to enquire into my work, have come round and treated me with cordiality and kindness."

"Have you passed any college examinations," I asked diffidently, "and do you possess any diplomas?"

"Oh yes, replied Professor Atkinson, with a reassuring smile, "but the diplomas that I had I returned, so as to leave me unfettered to work in my unconventional line. Among my examiners and teachers were the most distinguished men of the time—in my speciality; for instance, in Physiology I passed under Professor John

Burden Sanderson, the principal professor at Oxford University and the greatest physiologist of the day; in Anatomy, under John Burkitt, F.R.C.S. and President of the R.S.S.; under Taylor, M.D., Toxicologist of the University Hospital; Professor Bentley, M.D., of King's College, Professor Cobbould, M.D., of Middlesex Hospital, and Professor Robertson, Comparative Anatomist, as well as under many most eminent Parisian Professors."

"Are you ever called to cases out of this country?"

"Yes, this week I was asked to go to America, and I am going to-night to Paris to see a distinguished patient who has been given up by all the authorities in Europe."

"Then your practice embraces all sorts and conditions of people?"

"Yes, all classes, from princes to the humblest costermonger. At my Institute, I treat hundreds of cases every week that are dismissed elsewhere as incurable. I have saved many limbs from amputation and the great majority I am thankful to say I restore."

"And sporting men—do you number these among your patients?"

"Largely, and sporting women too. Quite lately I had a case from Lille, the champion jumper of the world, while performing at the Grand Cirque, slipped and ruptured the diaphragm and the abdominal muscles. He was for a long time under the best men in Paris without effect. I restored him in a fortnight, and had a beautiful letter of thanks. This week I have been called to two sporting Princes, stewards of Jockey Clubs, and I have a good many cases among jockeys, trainers, cricketers, football players, etc."

"Do you ever get tired of your work?"

"Indeed, no," said Professor Atkinson brightly; and after a pause, he added in a low tone, "I am never so happy as when at practice, and I am passionately fond of my work—not to speak of a sort of enchantment in succeeding when others fail. I think," he continued, meditatively, "that one great drawback in the medical profession is conventionality—professional etiquette."

The students are never taught to originate thought, only after book lines ; they never study manipulation nor the natural action of joints, nor the mechanical manipulation of them."

"But you must have natural advantages, or perhaps a gift that way."

"Ah, that is so. I have natural gifts of touch and mechanical dexterity. I am a good anatomist and have enormous practice which makes my hands, wrists, and muscles abnormally large and strong, so that I am able to perform operations that others cannot, and can obtain great leverage without roughness."

"Used you to take prizes in your student days ?"

"Yes, I got several for physiology, anatomy, anatomical specimens, etc."

"Do tell me some of the varieties of accidents that come under your hands, and how you treat them."

"With pleasure ; contractions and displacements of all sorts—elbow-joints, fixed wrists, dislocations and slipping of the hip, of the knee, white swellings, displacements of the ligatures of the neck ; of the small bones of feet and ankles, etc. Speaking of contractions, I remember a case of shortened leg by six inches, which by judicious manipulation, and stretching of tendons, I restored to its normal length. Then there are sprains, ricks of the worst kind, ruptured tendons—these, by the way, only take me a short time to restore ; under the old system, they often take months or years—dislocations of arms, shoulders, etc., and in replacing these I do not use extreme force or put the arm outwards, as the old method is. I lift the arm very gently ; make a lever of the muscles and a fulcrum of the arm gradually getting it into position and really with comparatively little pain. I get many cases of patients unable to raise the arm to the head from rheumatism of the muscles of the shoulder or from injuries. This is sometimes due to the slipping of the tendon at the head of the biceps. In these I have a great success, although the medical profession seems unable to touch them. Another form of lameness which appears to puzzle the surgeons is slip-

ping of the cartilage of the knee, and when they do happen to get it back the knee is frequently left weak. I have put back hundreds of these and guarantee to make the knee as strong as before the accident by simple manipulation."

"But you never injure patients by using too much force?"

No, that would be almost an impossibility, because I use most gradual manipulation, so much so that patients never faint under the operations nor are their joints unduly inflamed. I have also studied well the nervous system and its bearing on the spine."

"Oh! then you treat spinal complaints too," I asked, "and have you studied rheumatic and gouty affections?"

"Yes, to all," replied Professor Atkinson, "likewise, arthritis, neuritis, lumbago, sciatica, and indeed every form of rheumatism. I have many cases of spinal weakness, displacement and paralysis, also atrophy. My practice is by no means confined to bone-setting."

"Yes," I remarked, "I remember that you cure neuritis, as the lady who introduced me told me the whole story of your success with her." But at this juncture, a carriage drove up, so I bade the Professor good-bye and took my leave.

MR. HUTTON'S SUCCESSOR.

A CHAT WITH MR. JOHN ATKINSON, THE BONE-SETTER.

Appeared in the

"Westminster Budget," October 5th, 1894.

Outside the great world of Surgery, although intimately connected with it, there lies a branch which is rapidly gaining ground. The art of bone-setting is, however, a special gift, and the wonders that were performed in that line by the late Mr. Hutton are of world-wide reputation. His talent was inherited by his nephew, Mr. Robert Hutton, who passed away all too

soon, but happily not before he had instructed a pupil of great promise, who is now the recognised head of English bone-setters; he stands in fact, practically alone.

Mr. John Atkinson is a man of gentle birth, of learning, and of refinement. He was born in 1854, just at the beginning of the Crimean War, at Milnethorpe, near Kendal, in Westmoreland, where his father owned large estates. Losing both parents in early youth, John Atkinson was made a ward in Chancery, and was sent by his guardians to school first at Haversham, and later he was entered as a pupil at King's College, London. School-days over, he turned his attention to the study of comparative anatomy and dissection. Thence to Paris, where he worked early and late at the best schools, keeping always before his mind the goal that he has eventually reached. Then returning to London, he founded and established the Animals' Institute, and after the death of the younger Hutton, he took on his schools, the two men having previously worked there together.

Mr. Atkinson's ante-room would make a subject for a painter. Ascending a broad, straight flight of stairs, purposely made without hand-rails or any means of "holding on," you find yourself in a large, lofty room, lighted from the top, with a slightly raised dais at one end and a most untidy writing table, littered with papers and reports, pushed aside at the other. But nothing can long engage your attention in presence of a crowd as strangely assorted as that which is here gathered together. Found accidentally to-day, this crowd may be taken as representative of the never failing contrasts that may frequently be seen in Mr. Atkinson's waiting-room. Here stands a sturdy carter clad in fustian, whip in hand, his dray in the street below, who has looked in to have what he calls his "funny bone" set to rights. There is seated close together a group of little crippled children, with their anxious mothers. Beside these, in strange contrast, are a few patients drawn from the wealthier classes.

The "ring" is represented too. Yonder stands a heavy-weight wrestler speaking in low tones to a well-known prize-fighter. These gigantic sons of Anak look more nervous than anyone present !

But the great bone-setter enters. He is tall and powerfully built, as befits the (amateur) ex-champion boxer and wrestler. Passing through this room with a word of greeting to all, Mr. Atkinson takes you into his sanctum beyond, where two lads are waiting. The one on crutches is a light-weight wrestler ; the other, leaning on a stick, drags painfully a rigid limb, which he "ricked" at football eleven months ago. Without going further into details, it is enough to say that within half-an-hour the first of these walks out carrying his crutches over his shoulder, whilst the second, discarding his stick, crosses the big room jauntily, and in the exuberance of his joy "takes" the stairs in a couple of leaps.

An hour or so later, having disposed of his cases, Mr. Atkinson has leisure to converse. "A bone-setter," he says, "has a natural gift. I have tried in vain to teach some men. There is a knack about the work that cannot be altogether taught. Education and long study *alone* would never accomplish it. If I had gone through the ordinary curriculum of study *only*, it would have crushed all original thought and method, and I should have fallen into the same lines of thinking that are observed in everyday practice. My system is totally opposed to that which is in daily practice. I always keep an injured joint at work ; I lengthen and shorten tendons, and put back bones by leverage. Of course it is necessary to be a good anatomist, and one must know the working of every joint, muscle, tendon, nerve in the human frame. If I see a person walking lame in the street I know by the movement which joint is affected, and which muscle is not acting."

The subject of chloroform being introduced, Mr. Atkinson explains that he uses a natural anæsthetic, that is, numbing the nerves by a form of manipulation, so that he can operate without much pain. He was the first to

advocate the theory, which he has carried into practice successfully for many years, that inflammation of a joint is not the injurious process that it is generally considered, but that it is Nature's way of repairing injured tissues, so by judicious movement and mechanical action he will reduce inflammation in a short time without requiring the patient to rest, and in the many cases of contraction and club-feet that resort to him, instead of "cutting the tendons," he lengthens and gets them perfectly straight by gradually working them, and recovering their natural action.

In massage he is a great believer, and has studied and lectured on all its forms. Another improvement that he has discovered of late is a kind of electro-massage in cases of spinal paralysis and other nerve affections. It is in the long and tedious cases of rigidly fixed joints from neuritis and rheumatic arthritis, that are so successfully treated by him, that this new and original system of electro-manipulation comes into play, and this is the heavier part of his work. By this system he can work upon any branch or nerve-centre, and develop any muscle necessary for the restoration of the part. One great advantage that Mr. Atkinson claims for his method is that it can be adopted by any patient without shock or injurious effects to the constitution, as the electricity has to pass through the operator, and can be regulated at his will, so that the most delicate women and little children can be subject to it without deleterious consequences.

"Ladies," he remarks "are on the whole my most courageous patients, and they bear pain best. I have known a prize-fighter faint away at the door of my room, though afterwards, when he was under treatment, he was inclined to 'go for' me in good earnest. Children are very good to operate on so long as they can be kept amused by toys, or yonder musical box." This last was a gift from a poor patient whose child Mr. Atkinson had also cured, and who gratefully presented it for the benefit of other suffering little one. He has indeed a museum of such offerings—canes, sticks, umbrellas, and notably

a handsome gold watch which he greatly values. Opening this, he hands it to you, and you read the inscription, which bears the gratifying testimony that it was subscribed for and presented by "two thousand cripples."

Mr. Atkinson has the greatest affection for animals. To see them in any sufferings gives him pangs—"greater pangs," he declares, "than anything else." He is a strong anti-vivisectionist. He founded the Animals' Institute in order to study their natural diseases (as well as those of human beings) as they are, and without vivisection. He obtained his original theories principally from this research. "If horses or dogs," he remarks, "have a broken leg, you cannot place them in bed, therefore I set or fix the limb so that they can walk about and keep the circulation in a natural state, the result being that the broken or injured limb is cured in less than half the time that it would take in ordinary circumstances, that is to say, if it were laid up and never used. Another lesson that I learned by studying animals was the treatment of inflammation. I found that horses suffering from laminitis—inflammation of feet—could be cured of it whilst under continual gentle exercise, but if kept perfectly still they usually got congestion and sloughing of hoof. Then I said to myself "If this be the case with animals, why not the same with human beings?" I am now never troubled with long-continued inflammation of joints in my patients."



CYCLING FOR WOMEN.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. JOHN ATKINSON.

During the fashionable cycling time at Battersea Park a *Black and White* representative descried the stalwart form of Mr. John Atkinson, who is conspicuous in the world of athletes, and who is credited with having repaired the injuries most of the famous sportsmen and sportswomen of the day have sustained in the pursuit of their various recreations. The opportunity of securing the opinion of such an eminent authority on sport was not to be lost, so after words of greeting, came the question :

“Are you in favour of cycling for women ?”—“Most certainly,” he replied. “Within the last few years it has become a common amusement with them, and there is no doubt that, taken in moderation, it is of great advantage to their physical development. The Englishwoman has been too long regarded as a being who ought not to go into ordinary sports at all. Of course this is wrong, from every scientific point of view. In the previous fifty years women were in the habit of taking comparatively little exercise, as their household duties require no great physical or mental effort ; want of air and exercise was the cause, indeed, of their ailments, nervous prostration, hysteria, and the like. By taking to the lighter forms of sport they become strengthened in body and in mind.”

“And how do you regard it socially ?”—“Socially, cycling for woman has a great advantage. In many cases they have taken to it because their husbands, or intended husbands, are fond of the pastime. It is good for them from this point of view ; and it has the additional recommendation of enabling them to take gentle exercise in country surroundings where they may study the beauties of nature.”

“But it has its disadvantages, too, for young and

delicate girls, susceptible to spinal weakness and curvature?"—"Undoubtedly, but even in such cases I would not entirely debar them from it: in these circumstances they merely require some slight support. The mischief comes in when they ride low machines and hang over them as so many do—particularly men in the great racing competitions. But, to speak of women only, the harm is mainly when they try to accomplish long distances in a given space of time, or when they ride rapidly and overtax their strength; for then they frequently get over-heated and a chill follows. A woman-cyclist should only ride out for pleasure a convenient distance and not over-exert herself, so that she can enjoy the views and the society of her companions."

"Then you would insist on women taking this amusement only in the country?"—"Indeed I would," he rejoined earnestly, "or at least in the recognised tracks. I am no advocate for their racing along crowded streets—a practice becoming too common—however good riders they may be. It is impossible for them to avoid coming in contact with vehicles under the control of drivers who appear to delight in going as near cyclists as possible. The new track at South Kensington is one of the best in this country, and there they may spin as many miles as they please without being exposed to the danger of traffic. I think a number of tracks of this sort would be a boon to the public."

"What are the principal accidents connected with cycling that have come under your notice?"—"In ordinary circumstances the accidents from cycling are comparatively few. Sprains, dislocation of shoulders, bruises, displacements of knee cartilage,—all easily remedied if taken in time, I have had a few cases of fracture of the hip-joint, broken collar-bones, and even paralysis, but these were mostly among cyclists who had gone to the extreme of violent riding or who had come into collision with vehicles. In truth, you might find a similar catalogue in any form of sport. And to let alone sport, the slip in the street, the jumping in and out of omnibuses or cabs in motion are all as dangerous as cycling."

“What do you consider the special benefit derived from the exercise?”—“It has, assuredly, an excellent effect on the joints and limbs by increasing their tone and action and by developing the muscles and tendons. It is also beneficial in cases of chronic rheumatism, sciatica, lumbago, and incipient paralysis. When a patient comes to me who has had a joint laid up for a considerable time, I act thus: after placing in position the cartilage or tendon that causes the stiffness, and working back the natural action to the limb by breaking down any adhesions and lengthening any contracted tendon—so as to get the limb in the centre of gravity—I put him or her on a tricycle to restore the action and to develop the injured muscles. And nature does the rest, strengthening the part by the exercise cycling so well assists. The basis of my system is to study and to help nature. Many patients to whom I have recommended cycling have derived the utmost benefit from it.”

“And when women take to wheels how thoroughly they seem to enjoy it;”—“Naturally; to sum up the whole evidence in favour of cycling; on one side you have a healthy, robust woman able to run about with freedom, and, strengthened by the exercise, she gets her system into such good condition that she is not so liable to ordinary accidents; on the other, where a woman takes no exercise, she has no confidence even in crossing a street! she is more susceptible to dislocations and sprains, and she is altogether in a state less favourable to recovery. Among the votaries of the wheel are the Duchess of Connaught, the Duchess of Sutherland, Lady Norreys, and many of the leading ladies in society; but the cycle is no less the friend of the middle and lower classes, who have not the opportunity of horse exercise, hunting and so on.”

“What do you think of the cycling costume?”—“I think it is very becoming, particularly with the short skirt. The ordinary dress is cumbersome and entangling, while the knickerbockers afford more freedom and are healthier. The whole costume is applicable, I think, to all forms of sport and also to mountaineering.”

"I hope you do not hold with football as a sport for women?" I remarked, as I rose to leave.

"Decidedly not," he answered, with a laugh, "but that will never gain favour except with those who seek notoriety. No nice women who saw the last team of lady football players would ever dream of entering the lists. Cycling, tennis and golf are the best amusements women can have, because they all afford plenty of exercise in the open air at any time of the year."—*Black and White*.

A CHAT ON DISABLED ATHLETES,

Appeared in the "The Sketch," December 19th, 1894.

In an age like the present, when among the young and middle-aged alike, all athletic gamee, sports, and exercises are so much to the fore and form so large a portion of the training of youth at public and private schools, it is interesting to learn some of the varieties of accidents, most common in such sports, to which people are liable.

A chance conversation with a disabled football-player was the means of introducing the name of Mr. Atkinson, the well-known bone-setter of London, to whom most of the principal sportsmen and athletes of the day have, at one time or another had recourse to repair the injuries incurred in the exercise of their respective professions. I called on him at his consulting-rooms at 12A, Park Lane, and opened the ball by asking his opinion on athletic training.

"There is no doubt whatsoever," replied Mr. Atkinson, as he handed me a cigarette, "that the old English sports and games have done a vast amount of good in making Englishmen brave, humane, and respected for their valour in all parts of the world."

"Which do you consider the most popular forms of sport of the day?"

"Football and cricket, decidedly; and I may include cycling. The former have increased during late years to a great extent, and the latter alarmingly."

"Is any special form of training adopted for a professional football player?"

"Certainly. The professional teams are kept in strict training during the whole season; they are so heavily paid, and the gate-money is made such a feature of, that the old love of the sport for its own sake is almost entirely lost. Unfortunately, the professional element has so crept into the amateur ranks that three-fourths of the so-called 'amateurs' are nothing better than professionals, and I think that is the greatest curse of our present form of sports, as they appear to animate them more than the honour and glory of their prowess."

"What is the most common form of accident to football players?"

"Sprains, displacement of knee-cartilage, fractures, spinal injuries, and simple dislocations."

"What are the injuries to which boxers are most liable?"

"Injuries to knuckles and hands, displacement of the shoulder biceps, displacement of muscles, contusions, and general dislocations. Yes," he continued, in reply to my question as to whether jockeys and steeplechase riders were often among his patients, "I get in a great number of accidents, during the racing season, not only in England, but from America, Austria, and France, since my predecessor, the late Mr. Hutton, so successfully treated Fred Archer."

"Do you find any specific development of muscles in different forms of athletes?"

"Oh, yes; the various forms of sport develop different muscles; so much so that, when I see an athlete and examine him, I can always tell him, without questioning, what sort of exercise he has been practicing most. Unfortunately, the majority of men who go into training for specific forms of sport do not, as a general rule, develop the special muscles that are required for that specific form. Frequently they are those that are

not essential, but, indeed, are a detriment to them, with the result that they rather add to their weight. This is especially the case with men who have to enter into light-weight competitions. They often taken too violent exercise and too little nutriment to retain their normal strength. This is most common in the boxing competitions of the present day."

"May I ask what has been your experience of cricketers' accidents?"

I have had patients among all classes of cricketers, from Lockwood, Richardson, Wood, the Rev. W. Rashleigh—who has been to me quite lately—down to the humblest eleven."

"What is your own favourite form of sport?"

"I consider," he said reflectively, "that wrestling, take it all round, is one of the finest of old English forms for developing the whole of the muscles of the body. It gives a man that firmness on his legs, and the keenness and quickness of sight, which are so useful even to pedestrians in their ordinary walk of life. A wrestler is more on the *qui vive*, and he is not so liable to accident, as his muscles are usually better developed, and are therefore able to take a much greater strain."

"When you said just now that cycling has increased 'alarmingly,' of late years, did you refer to the injuries done to others or to the cyclists themselves?"

"Well," he replied, laughing, "I think I may safely say, to both, for I have had many victims of, and among, the votaries of the wheel; but speaking of themselves only, since the long-distance and endurance riding against time have begun, accidents have been considerably multiplied. Undoubtedly the low-wheel safety cycle has had a tendency to injure many men by their over-reaching to get at the handles. It becomes a serious matter now, and I have had a number of cases of paralysis, caused by accidents of the lumbar regions by the terrible strain put upon them."

"Take it all round, perhaps rowing, tennis, golfing, seem the safest of amusements, I should think."

"Perhaps so, and yet there is the common 'tennis

elbow,' the 'rower's shoulder,' and the 'golfer's wrist,' all of which I see a good deal. Golf, again, often produces a peculiar condition of the wrist—a sprain of muscles between the ulna and radius. Even with great pedestrians I have had extensive practice. In these cases it is usual to find the muscles of the legs and loins affected, but a most common occurrence is rupture of the tendon Achilles, and displacement of the metatarsal bones. Curtis, the amateur champion walker of the world, was injured in this way very severely, and was unable to walk for a long time till I replaced them."

"I have heard it said that you never permit your cases to recruit in bed, and that you discard the general use of splints. Is it true?"

"Quite true," he replied; "I always keep them at natural exercise. I try to assist Nature as much as possible in all my work, as I find she knows more of repairing the system than any drugs or appliances with which I have come in contact."

"You must have had considerable experience of the accidents of the hunting field and from shooting?"

"Very considerable. Any number of accidents among shooting men occur from the rebounding of the gun, which injures the muscles and tendons of the shoulder, and so fixes the lower head of the biceps that the patient is unable to lift the arm, and suffers great pain. I have had great success with such cases, and have never yet failed with one. As to hunting catastrophes, a well-known millionaire consulted me, with paralysis of the hand and arm, produced by an injury. The horse fell on his elbow, but my patient recovered rapidly after having the joint and muscles adjusted. Some of the most troublesome hunting cases I have had this season was a rupture of what is commonly called the tailor muscle, or shoulder-lameness, which is a displacement of the upper head of the biceps. This operation, which was so difficult to cure in the past, I now found quite easy by proper manipulation. I treated a well-known sporting Prince, who had, for over three years, tried almost all the systems there are in existence.

A very great lady, one of the hardest riders in England, who was suffering from the same cause, was generously brought to me by a most distinguished surgeon."

"You must have studied anatomy very thoroughly."

"I have indeed, and I have taken the principal prizes in my special line for comparative anatomy and physiology; but all the study and knowledge in the world would be useless without the special knack—I may almost call it a gift—without which it is impossible to be a successful bone-setter."

"It must surely require enormous strength on your part?"

"Without doubt; and when I tell you that I have treated Sandow, Lewis, the Champion of America; Samson, and other prominent 'strong men,' you will judge that my own muscles needed to be well developed to overcome them. Feel these," he added, as he extended his hands, where the great outstanding muscles of the palms were like iron to my touch. "Two of my most interesting cases," he continued, "were the 'Serpentine Lady,' and 'Athleta,' the 'strong woman,' while the stage has furnished me with innumerable patients among dancers and actors, and the music-halls with disabled acrobats, etc."

"One last question, Mr. Atkinson, if it is not an indiscreet one. How do you get on with the doctors?"

"At first, those who have not seen my system of treatment are naturally prejudiced; but, be it understood, I am not a physician, not a surgeon, but a bone-setter, *pur et simple*, and, I may say this, some eminent members of the profession who have visited me have been considerably taken by surprise, and I have not a few medical men under my treatment. My rooms in Wilton Place, where I see many thousands of poor people yearly, gratis, are open for inspection to all who are interested in such cases, whether they be laymen or in the medical profession, and I ask nothing better than that they should come and judge for themselves of my method of work and of its success."

CHATS WITH PROFESSOR ATKINSON ON FASHIONABLE
BOOTS AND THE INJURIES CAUSED THEREBY.

"Yes, it is these dreadful boots," said Professor Atkinson to me one day in his consulting room, after he had despatched a patient, "these boots with the ridiculously high heels placed near the middle of the sole, the sharply pointed toe, the tight band or toe-strap across, which are so universal and so hurtful to the feet, that are productive of contracted tendons, displaced and fixed joints, in-growing nails and many other evils. They really deform women's feet almost as much as the system that used to be adopted by Chinese ladies of high degree!"

"But you will allow," I said, "that they make a foot look small."

"Oh! yes," he answered with a shrug of the shoulders, "the foot may look small, but see it without a stocking and observe how utterly the beautiful shape of a human foot is ruined by such a boot or shoe. Look at this cast of a perfect foot"—showing me a model—"and then look at this fashionable shoe and again look at this mould of the foot that has worn such an one." The latter was a gruesome object; the great toe was bent under the next, and on the outer side was an unsightly excrescence, while the whole had a pinched and painful appearance. The offending shoe was a dainty specimen of patent leather with a heel of about two inches sloped off the centre of the sole, an exquisitely pointed toe and a neat toe-cap elaborately stitched, and finished off with a large buckle on a bow of ribbon, and certainly looked exceedingly smart.

"Is not that a bunion?" I asked, pointing to the mould.

"Yes," answered Professor Atkinson, "and entirely produced by the deleterious effect of this form of shoe. The great toe has had no room, and has forced itself behind the others, preventing a free action of the foot

“while the joint was swollen, enlarged, and become considerably inflamed.”

“But what is a bunion, and is it curable?” “Certainly it is curable. It is merely a displacement of the joint which can easily be remedied by manipulation and working back its natural action, but this treatment must be assisted by the patient, who should discard the article that has caused the injuries and take to a rational, medium-sized boot, not necessary hideous, but a good fit and cut, and really comfortable in every direction without any undue pressure. I never have any difficulty in curing the worst form of bunion.”

“What other injuries are caused by wearing the boots and shoes of the day?”

“Well, the tendon Achilles frequently gets contracted, as the high, artificial heel places the natural heel much higher than nature meant it to be.”

“And how do you act in such a case? Must the tendon be cut?” I enquired.

“By no means.” replied Professor Atkinson quickly. The contraction is easily remedied by judiciously working and constantly stretching the tendon which then resumes its elasticity, instead of the cutting process or the wearing of a heavy instrument—both so common in everyday practice—causing sad disfigurement and preventing the natural action of the foot in walking. Sprained ankles, too, are a common form of injury to the wearer of high heels, as again the natural heel is too much elevated and the weight of the body is consequently thrown on the great toe, which causes it to grow abnormally large and unsightly; the high heel is also most dangerous when descending stairs. The small bones of the feet which form the small joints are frequently thrown out of place by high heels and narrow pointed toes.”

“And with sprained ankles, I presume, you use cold fomentations and simple lotions, and keep the patient laid up?”

“Wrong again,” said the Professor, with a smile. My system of treatment is altogether different. Lotions and dressings often cause an effusion to be thrown out,

of which it is sometimes difficult to get rid. This system is adopted in old-fashioned practices, but I consider that it is a great mistake to 'lay up' a patient suffering from a simple sprain. I rectify it by gentle manipulation and continual stretching to restore the natural action, and bid him go about as usual. Mothers do great harm to their children by letting them wear heels that are worn down for any length of time, as it has a tendency to alter the action of the limbs, and throw them out of the centre of gravity which gives them a "lob" walk, but the greatest curse of the ordinary boot or shoe is the hard, tight toe-cap which is the cause of so many deformed children."

"After this," Professor, "I shall go to my bootmaker and desire him to make my boots a size too large for me!"

"Nay," replied Professor Atkinson, laughing, as he escorted me to the hall door. "You must do nothing of the sort! It is just as great a mistake to have too large as too small a boot, as it produces dropping of the arch of the foot by weakening the tendons that support the bones of the instep. However, when the sole drops, it is usually restored by working at and manipulating the joints involved and strengthening the tendons that support it."

"A NOTABLE CURE."

It was on a somewhat bleak morning that I travelled down to Newmarket to see the Cambridgeshire run, but the strong breezes and chilly atmosphere had not deterred the usual fashionable assemblage from visiting this favourite race-meeting. While strolling round the paddocks and chatting to various friends among the jockeys and trainers, I heard many remarks made about a marvellous cure that had been effected on the Honble. George Lambton, the popular gentleman jockey and trainer, who had been disabled from riding for many years, owing to a bad fall that he had had while steeple-

chasing. He had been attended, I was told, by some of the greatest men in Europe, and had been blistered, fired, and otherwise treated in various ways, but all to no purpose. "But lately," said my informant, "he has been entirely cured by a skilful system of manipulation. He has been able to ride several winners—indeed it seems to have been his most successful season—and he was never more fit in his life. He was advised by Her Grace the Duchess of to try the treatment.

Taking out my notebook, I requested the name and address of the operator. My friend told me it was Professor Atkinson, of 12, Park Lane, the celebrated bone-setter, so well-known and esteemed, not only in the world of sport but by a large section of society, from the highest to the lowest.

"I should like to see him," I said, "Is he to be got at easily? I have a friend, a young Catholic priest, who is utterly disabled from a spinal accident and suffers agonies which no one can relieve. Professor Atkinson might cure him!"

"Go to him, sir," answered the enthusiastic racehorse owner and trainer, "You want no introduction—or stay—take my card, if you will?"—giving me one, which bore the name of a distinguished member of the Jockey Club. "The Professor will cure the reverend gentleman to a certainty."

The next evening, when my journalistic duties were over, I called, rather late, at Park Lane, and found Professor Atkinson just sitting down to a solitary and long-delayed meal. He would not hear of my going away, but hospitably remarking, "Any friend of Mr. ———'s is welcome. Forbes,"—to the butler—"a cover for this gentleman. Sit down, sir, and take pot luck with me, and we will discuss business later, over a cigar."

My host was a tall, powerfully-built man, extremely courteous and quiet in manner and full of bright, sparkling conversation that rippled on from one subject to another with a charm and fascination that were irresistible. Music, poetry, the drama of the day,

Shakespeare, religion, politics—what not? By and bye, “Forbes” cleared the table, brushed up the hearth, deposited a choice brand of cigars by his master’s side and withdrew.

“Now,” said the Professor, cheerily, “draw your chair to the fire, the evenings are getting chilly; fill your glass, and to business. But,” he added, with a suspicion of a twinkle in his eye, “I think I can make a guess at it. My friend’s card and your mention of having been at Newmarket. Putting two and two together, has it, perchance anything to do with a well-known gentleman jockey?”

“You must be a wizard, Professor,” I answered with a laugh, “but I must confess that this was certainly one object of my unceremonious visit—of the other, more anon—but the extraordinary cure that you worked on him has caused quite a sensation in the society of the sporting world. I should so much like to know if you restored him by means of the Metzker, of Weisbaden, or Bracchi, of Aix-les-Bains, or the Swedish treatment of massage?”

“By none of these,” said the Professor, emphatically. I understand all their proceedings, having well studied them, and I do sometimes resort to a massage of my own, but as I have to undertake so many cases given up by these gentlemen, as well as by the leading medical profession, it is obvious that it would be simply useless for me to adopt any of their methods.”

“Then, do you follow the system of one or two who are professedly followers of Hutton’s treatment?”

“Certainly not. If you wish to know about *their* systems, you have only to come to my consulting rooms, and hear what their patients—who come to me—say. They report that Hutton is said to have made a person with a sprained ankle walk across a room without manipulation. This is quite wrong, and those who profess to follow this treatment *thus*, have, according to my experience, no knowledge of it. I have known three generations of Huttons, and their treatment. They had a natural mechanical gift and touch, and very extensive

practice. You *must* gradually work a joint under the centre of gravity and recover the *natural action*, before placing the whole weight of the body on it, then—according to the case—give gentle exercise.”

“ But do not the Swedish workers with their mechanical appliances do the same thing ? ”

“ By no means. My experience, which is very great, of the Swedish *masseurs* who come to this country, is, that they do not understand even the rudiments of manipulation. They lack touch, animal mechanics, and are most rough and careless in the direction they move limbs ; moreover, they have but a superficial knowledge of anatomy. Of course, I believe in the good that must result from motion and counter-extension, but such motion must be in the right direction and guided by a clear conception of the object to be attained, as false movements may cause serious damage ; increased mobility may be induced at the expense of permanent harm. A false mobility only misleads, and may be productive of great evil when undue force is used and where ignorance is brought to bear in manipulation.”

“ But I have heard that you lengthen and shorten legs. You surely must use force ? ”

“ In no operation do I use excessive force, I can assure you—either to produce fainting in a patient or to cause his limb even to become inflamed, for which reason I rarely use anæsthetics, as according to my idea they inconvenience both patient and operator. A man who has large experience and practice does not require these things. Shall I say—a skilful manipulator ? Indeed, they only impede instead of assisting him in regaining natural mechanical action. Do you follow me ? ”

“ Entirely. You do not believe then in laying a limb up after an accident ? ”

“ No, I see a great deal of harm done daily in keeping a limb in a sling or resting position, as it retards the circulation and takes away the mechanical motion which is one of its motive powers, and prevents nature from throwing off what she does not require for healing process. I believe in Professor Cheyne of the Edinburgh

University, who has also come to the same conclusion, as he says, "mechanical rest is not necessarily physiological rest!"

"Forgive me for asking you, Professor," I presently said, "but do any of the medical men agree with you?"

"Ask me what you will," answered Professor Atkinson, kindly. "I have no secrets. Yes, those who have known my work, *do*, but it will not be many years before all the medical profession recognise it; they have been drifting away gradually for a long time. John Hunter, perhaps the greatest surgeon and anatomist that ever lived, advocated, or I may say, practised it not far from where we stand now—for I built my lecture room on the old foundations of his anatomical room."

"Perhaps he may have visited you in the spirit and given you inspiration!"

"Ah! who knows! The same idea has often occurred to me when in a meditative mood, and I have wondered to myself whether it were so or not. In many ways perhaps he did, for I read and pondered over his works when I was at college—probably because he came from within a few miles from my native place. A very near relation of mine—also from the same county, has, I believe been inspired by the same source, as he is now the greatest anatomist of the century."

"And you are fond of your work, Professor?" "*Fond* is but too mild a term to use," said the great Bone-setter, in low, eager tones, the while his eyes glistened with enthusiasm. "I love it passionately; it is the greatest pleasure in my life. In fact, I'm wedded to it. To be able to restore my fellow creatures to health when all other means have failed—more especially when they have tried all the eminent men in Europe! Ah! no words can describe my joy in it!" And then a long pause ensued which I broke by asking—"Wherein do you differ from Hutton?"

"Well," he replied, gently, "perhaps only in that I have had a much greater scientific training, and use gradual manipulation instead of force, and my natural mechanical gift has enabled me to replace joints by

leverage, and that may be why I have had so far greater a success than many of my competitors. But, now I come to think of it, you had a two-fold object in your visit this evening, is there anything I can do for you?"

"Indeed, yes, Professor. It is but a short story. A young friend—a Catholic priest, lies at West Kensington in terrible anguish. Some thirteen months ago he was carrying a heavy load, slipped down some stone steps and severely injured his back. He has been encased in heavy instruments, is wasted to a shadow and cannot walk, and he has spent much of his substance but grows worse instead of better."

"Give me his address," answered Professor Atkinson, "and tell him I will drive down to-morrow."

"But, but"—I began, hesitatingly, "he is poor—very poor—and if he should not be able——"

"I understand," said the Professor, quickly. "If he be unable to pay, I shall charge him nothing. I will report to you on his case in about a fortnight; but, in any circumstances, do look in again when you have an evening to spare." And I promised, but ere the "fortnight" was over I had a visitor at my modest flat—three flights up—and he was the little priest! "How can I thank you enough, my dear fellow," he said, with beaming countenance. "You have been the means, under God," lowering his voice reverently, "of my getting on my feet again. Your good, wonderful Professor found out in ten minutes what was the matter with me, and by his skilful manipulation soon cured me. I have been out and about for five days—I, who never thought to walk again, and looked forward to death as the only release from my sufferings! God bless him! Do you know I have driven all the way here on the top of an omnibus, and even climbed up your awful steps without difficulty, and I go back to my work next week."

"VERITAS."

"Kensington Society."

It is surprising that a paper of such standing as *The Lancet* should have admitted in its columns so absurd an article on Prof. Atkinson, the joint and spine specialist, and two Duchesses, his patients, as appeared on January 12th. Skill and superlative excellence in any walk of life command respect. Prof. Atkinson's line is quite *sui generis* and far from being ignorant, he has deeply studied and considered his subject, and has accomplished cures which have amazed the doctors. We have many physicians, but only one Prof. Atkinson, and his power of manipulation is considered a gift, in fact has always been so, but in Prof. Atkinson's case he has added to intuitive acumen the advantages of real learning. It seems very strange that the fact of the Duchesses of Sutherland and Hamilton going to the very man who has cured them should subject them to the imputation of being illogical. It would prove, on the contrary, that they are singularly logical and sensible, and large-minded enough not to harbour any prejudice against a clever man, though he may deviate from the beaten tracks.

"Sportsman."

Mr. Peggy Bettinson, the famous athlete and genial manager of National Sporting Club, has now, thanks to the well-known bone-setter, Prof. Atkinson, recovered his serious accident. This most gratifying news, as we believe the local medical practitioners contemplated the removal of the limb.

"Sporting Life."

Prince Henry of Pless, who broke his wrist and injured his shoulder while hunting with Mr. Fernie's hounds last week has had them successfully set by Prof. Atkinson, the joint specialist. Several other members of the Hunt are under his treatment. Duke Gunther of Schleswig-Holstein, brother of the German Empress, while hunting with the Quorn Hounds in Leicestershire, met with a serious accident, Prof. Atkinson, the eminent specialist, was sent for, and replaced the

injured bones, also restored a displaced muscle which caused great trouble to His Royal Highness for many years.

INSTITUTE OF HYGIENIC MANIPULATION.

The difficulty of obtaining well-educated and well-trained manipulators for the application of electricity, hygienic rubbing, and for the practice of joint-movement and muscle-training, is widely recognised. The majority of the persons to whom these arts are now entrusted are either deficient in technical knowledge and training or possessed of manners and ways that are most objectionable. The training of the ordinary professional nurse does not embrace these matters, and as the orthodox surgeon, with few exceptions, leaves them to so-called specialists from abroad, there is little chance of proper training being available.

Just as we have "first-aid" classes to anticipate the arrival of a surgeon, so should we have "hygienic manipulation classes" to continue and carry out the requirements of treatment. All that is requisite is the opportunity for teaching and training. The work would be most suitable for well-educated ladies, possessing the necessary physique and aptitude.

Prof. ATKINSON will give lectures and demonstrations to ladies wishing to become proficient in the art of medical manipulation, at

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